

Christmas day

Mike,

The words are not there for me to fully express my appreciation and gratitude to you. You are a friend beyond all belief, someone who truly understands the meaning of the word and everything I think of saying seems woefully inadequate.

And if I didn't realize some things soon enough, I realize it now, like the time more than 20 years ago when you called and said, "I have this idea. How about if I play drums and Paul plays bass?" You were looking out for me!

Not too long ago we were talking about the first time we met. When I opened the door, and you were standing there in your denim jacket with your bass slung over your shoulder, I had to restrain myself from saying, "You're in the band right there and then." I just knew!

Hopefully this year, I'll find a way out of the nightmare I was thrown into, an experience that you more than anyone else seemed to comprehend. And I think the only way out is through creating, in other words what I do.

While I haven't talked to him in years and he seems to have vanished off the map, one thing, the most important thing Rick Allen ever said to me was when I came back from Texas and played him the album, and he said, "*This* is what you do!." Well, that and writing.

So this is my small little way of saying thank you for being you and for being my friend and caring.

